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Abstract

This invention uses file hash signatures, including but not limited to those generated from MD5, MD2, SHA-1, SHA-224, SHA-256, SHA-384, SHA-512 and FIPS 180-2 files, and various file comparison and matching technologies in a real time or near real time solution to determine if digital content has been stolen or otherwise illegally, opened, transferred, viewed, played or copied. Once digital content has been analyzed (match or no match) one or more follow-on actions can be taken with respect to the content based on preferences established by the owner/authorized agent of the digital content. These include blocking the copy or playback process, preventing transferring of files over a network or between systems, notification to one or more users about the theft of illegal use and/or instruction(s) to the unauthorized user. Digital content includes but is not limited to digital audio, digital picture and video, and digital documentation.